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AG-TALK

Newsletter for the Leduc District Office

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, Alberta Pulse Growers Commission and Alberta Reduced Tillage Initiative

4301 - 50 Street
Leduc AB T9E 7H3

Serving the Counties of Leduc, Strathmore and Wetaskiwin, the M.D. of Brazeau and More!

Welcome to our office newsletter! This first edition introduces the staff and services at the Leduc district office. The next newsletter will be published at the end of March, 1998. Please direct your questions, comments and article suggestions to Dee Ann Benard or George Rock. Read on to find out more about how we can help you, your business and your organization.

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Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development (AAFRD) Leduc
Phone: 986-8985 (Toll-free 310-0000)
Fax: 986-1085

We provide up-to-date information on current technology, research and agriculture programs in the areas of crop production, financial management and organizations. We offer unbiased information, education and one-on-one consulting.

Alberta
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

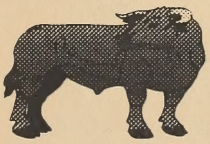
People · Service · Progress
SINCE 1906

Dee Ann Benard...Cereals/Oilseeds Specialist
Dee Ann can help you with your cereal and oilseed concerns, be it herbicides, diseases, insects, fertility, weather, or any crop-related concerns. She can assist you with anything new you would like information about, from transgenic varieties to fall-seeding canola, and most things in between.

Cindy Bishop...Rural Development Specialist/Organizations
Cindy works with organizations and individuals, linking them to people and information and developing leadership potential, to ensure their futures as enduring, self-reliant organizations. Cindy can help you focus your energy to plan, lead and achieve results.

George Rock...Farm Management Specialist
With Alberta Agriculture since 1979, George assists farm and agriculture businesses by creating, analyzing and delivering critical management information as well as the adoption of appropriate technology. Other areas include issues of ownership, business arrangements, asset acquisition, finance and farm transfers.

Leanne Chubocha...Customer Service Representative
Leanne was born and raised on a farm in the County of Leduc. She started with the office on November 24 and is glad to be your first stop for information, client service and referrals.



You know you are a farmer if:

You have driven off the road while examining your neighbour's crops!

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)

This office covers the County of Leduc, part of the County of Strathcona, part of the County of Wetaskiwin and part of the M.D. of Brazeau up to Drayton Valley. If you would like additional information on any of our services, please call the office or feel free to stop in.

Lending Division

Phone: 986-0999 Fax: 986-1085

Bill Tchir...Loans Officer

Bill has been with AFSC for 17 years, the last five of which have been spent here in Leduc. He can help you with:

- Beginning Farmer Program
- Vendor Mortgage Plan
- Developing Farmer Program
- Farm Loan Guarantee Program
- Disaster Assistance Loan Program/ Crop Loss Option

Insurance Division

Phone: 986-4088

Fax: 986-1085

Val Hensch...Insurance Administrator

Val has been the Insurance Administrator in Leduc for the past 13 years. Born and raised on a farm in the area, she is actively involved in a grain and livestock operation. She can help you with:

- All-Risk Crop Insurance
- Straight Hail Insurance
- Forage Insurance
- Farm Income Disaster Program
- Wildlife Fund

Carol Ohrn...Administrative Support

Carol has been with AFSC for 11 years on a casual part-time basis. Her position has recently changed to permanent part-time, providing support for insurance and lending.

Karen Brenneis...Administrative Support

Karen is new to the Corporation, working on a casual part-time basis for lending and insurance. Her knowledge of computers and her farming background are an asset to the office.

Alberta Pulse Growers Commission (APGC)

Phone/Fax: 986-9398

This commission represents 4,300 producers of pulse crops, growing 385,000 acres of peas, 30,000 acres of dry beans, and 25,000 acres of lentils in 1997. The purpose of this provincial office is to:

1. Improve and expand domestic and international markets for pulse crops.
2. Inform potential pulse producers of new technologies and the benefits of pulse crops in rotations.
3. Coordinate and facilitate production research in order to ensure continuation of new technologies and varieties.

Janette McDonald Adam...General Manager

A former District Agriculturist in Leduc, Janette assumed the position of General Manager in March of 1995.

Marla Schumacher...Secretary-Treasurer

Marla has lived and worked in the Leduc area for most of her life and assumed this position in July of 1996.

Alberta Reduced Tillage Initiative (ARTI)

Phone: 980-4898 Cell: 940-8625

Fax: 986-1085

ARTI provides people, programs, activities and information to accelerate the adoption of reduced tillage.

Mark Olson...Agronomist

Mark started in this office on November 3, 1997. Mark spent the previous 13 years with AAFRD as a district agriculturist and pulse and special crops specialist.

Other AAFRD Specialists that serve this area (use the Alberta Government RITE line at 310-0000).

Agricultural Engineering...

Bob Buchanan, Barrhead - 674-8252

Wayne Winchell, Barrhead - 674-8254

Beef...

Brian Koberstein, Wetaskiwin - 361-1240

John Van Keulen, Drayton Valley - 542-5368

Forages...

Allan Macaulay, Barrhead - 674-8213

Fred Young, Evansburg - 727-3673

Marketing...

Ken Bunnage, Lamont - 895-2219

Doug Walkey, Lacombe - 782-3301

Problem Wildlife...

David Brennan, Barrhead - 674-8304

Pulses and Special Crops...

Randy Bjorklund, Lamont - 895-2219

Neil Miller, Lacombe - 782-3301

Rural Development, Business...

Sharon Homeniuk, Stony Plain - 963-6101

Janice McGregor, Morinville - 939-4351

Soil Conservation...

Tara Donald, Barrhead - 674-8305

Important Dates

- All-Risk Crop Insurance - Harvested production report must be completed and sent to your district office by Nov 30. A $50.00 late penalty applies after this date.
- Forage Insurance - Deadline for application is February 28.
- All-Risk Crop Insurance - Deadline for application is April 30th.
- Note: Straight hail insurance goes into effect at noon the day following the date of application.
- See the Upcoming Events section for other important dates.

Ropin' the Web Internet Site
Use your computer to visit the AAFRD web page at **http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca**. Our acclaimed site has over 16,000 pages of information. Spend some time browsing, or use the search engine near the top of the home page to look up specific topics. A few of the things to be found include the General Store area (found at the bottom left hand side of the home page) that lists feed, livestock, pasture, grain, etc. for sale. Individuals can post information directly from their own computers, or one of AAFRD's staff members would be happy to help. Daily Updates (also found on the home page) gives information on weather, markets and other news. As well, there is an abundance of information on most crops and livestock, and there are links to all sorts of other excellent Internet sites. If you don't have Internet access, or if you would like some assistance, visit our office for a hands-on demonstration and free access to the Internet.

Warning: Hay and Straw Sellers Beware!
Hay and straw predators have been taking advantage of people selling their hay and straw, by out and out stealing it, or by paying for only part of it. They have several different scams, such as paying with cash for the first few loads, then writing bad cheques for the rest. Or calling to say they are half an hour behind the trucker - their car broke down or some such thing - but then never showing up. They may use names that are very similar to legitimate businesses, so that a credit check looks good. Sometimes they pull up while the farmer is loading for a known customer, and acts like a second unit, driving away with a free load. Beware these opportunists: require payment by cash, certified cheque, or bank draft from buyers you don't know (unless they are a well-known, established company), or wait until the cheque has cleared before you load. Also, make sure to get the name, address, and license number of the trucker, and get a signed receipt. Always verify the buyer and make sure you know where the load is going. Common sense and these precautions should help minimize your risk. A final note: listen to your intuition - if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. If you do become a victim, report it to police immediately.

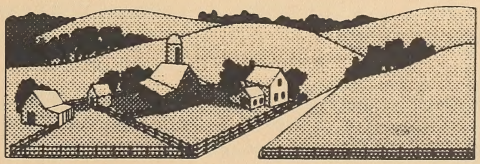
New Publications
Tax Management Strategies for Farmers.
(Agdex 837-1) Price $10 + GST.

Design the Masthead Contest
Are you feeling artistically inspired? Would you like to make $25 and see your masterpiece displayed in our newsletter? We are having a contest to design the newsletter masthead, and we would like it to have an agriculture theme. Please submit your entry to the office by January 30, 1998.

Ag-Facts
Insurance Facts
In 1996, 91,232 acres of cereal, oilseed and pulse crops were insured in the Leduc Region. Due to the early onset of winter in 1996, approximately 2,190 acres were not harvested. Insured acreage increased to 97,401 acres in 1997. The wet weather conditions in the spring left 2,870 acres unseeded this year. In the Barrhead Region, there were 156,730 acres unseeded in 1997.
Yield Facts
The Leduc area had an average to above average year for crop production in 1997, depending on the crop. The table below gives Statistics Canada's September estimated yield averages for some crops for all of Alberta and the Leduc office's preliminary estimates for yield averages for the Leduc area.

Crop	Alberta (bu/ac)	Leduc area (bu/ac)
Wheat	38.2	45
Barley	57.3	57
Oats	63.5	69
Canola	22.8	32

Crop Facts
One of the major problems this year was a disease of wheat called Take-all. This disease is caused by a fungus, and the symptoms include shiny black roots and white empty heads, which eventually turn grey. This disease can cause yield losses of up to 90%, with 40%-60% losses not uncommon. This disease is especially prevalent when the spring or early summer are wet, and when wheat follows wheat or barley in a rotation. Take-all can also affect barley, but to a lesser degree. The fungus survives on cereal debris and volunteers, making proper rotation and control of volunteers especially important. Copper deficiency may worsen the effects of the disease. Unfortunately, there is no cure for this disease, and once it is observed in a field, it is already a serious problem. The best solution is prevention: rotate out of cereals for at least one year, control volunteer cereals, ensure good fertility (soil test), and if you must follow a cereal with a cereal and especially if you have had Take-all in the past, plant wheat first.



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Upcoming Events

What? **Diseases of Wheat and Barley.**
Topics include diagnosis, control, and prevention of important barley and wheat diseases (e.g. take-all, scald, net blotch, etc.).
Where? Leduc District Office (4301 - 50 Street)
When? January 13, 1998; 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
How much? Free, but please pre-register by January 9.

What? **Land Rental Workshop.**
Topics include determining fair rent; cost of production of various crops; types of rentals; lease agreements.
Where? Leduc District Office (4301 - 50 Street)
When? January 14, 1998; 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
How much? Free, but please pre-register by January 9.

What? **Precision Farming... come put the pieces together!**
Where? Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton.
When? January 21 & 22, 1998.
How much? $90.00 + GST; ($110.00 + GST after December 20, 1997).

What? **Farm Accounting with Quickbooks™ 4.5.**
Where? Conference Room, Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development, 4301 - 50 Street, Leduc.
When? February 2, 3 & 4, 1998; 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.
How much? $225 (There is no subsidy for this course, this price is based on a minimum of 10).

What? **Advanced Farm Accounting with Quickbooks™ 4.5.**
Topics include payroll, accounts payable and accounts receivable.
Where? Conference Room, Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development, 4301 - 50 Street, Leduc.
When? February 2 & 3, 1998; 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm.
How much? $125 (There is no subsidy for this course, this price is based on a minimum of 8).

What? **Growing the Farm Business Together - A Farm Transfer Education Fair.**
Where & When? Westlock, Westlock Inn, February 10, 1998; 1:00 - 8:00 pm.
Stony Plain, Stony Motor Inn, February 11, 1998; 1:00 - 8:00 pm.
Barrhead, Barrhead Inn, February 12, 1998; 1:00 - 8:00 pm.
Camrose Regional Exhibition, Camrose, February 17, 1998; 1:00 - 8:00 pm.
Killam, Killam Legion, February 18, 1998; 1:00 to 8:00 pm.
How much? Free, but please pre-register.

What? **Canola Workshop.**
Topics include fertility, varieties, diseases, weed control, insects, seed placement and alternate seeding dates.
Where? TBA (Wetaskiwin).
When? February 24, 1998.
How much? TBA.

What? **Cereals Workshop.**
Topics include fertility, varieties, diseases, weed control, insects, factors affecting quality and grade and (possibly) a market update.
Where? TBA (Leduc).
When? March 3, 1998.
How much? TBA.

Please contact 986-8985 for more information about, or to pre-register for, any of these events.